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## Chapter 13

### Firefighter Training and Qualifications

#### Introduction

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) sanctioned firefighters are trained and qualified according to the NWCG and other standards, as outlined below.

#### Policy

Firefighters must meet standards identified in the NWCG publication *PMS 310-1 National Interagency Incident Management System Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*. The 310-1 may be found at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

- **FS** - See *FSH 5109.17* for additional requirements.

Certain firefighters must meet standards identified in the *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide*. The *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards and Guide* may be found at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov>

Agency standards for training and qualifications may exceed the minimum standards established by National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Such additional standards will be approved by the Fire Directors, and implemented through the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS). Standards which may exceed the minimum standards established by NWCG are identified in:

- **BLM** - *BLM Fire and Aviation Training Information Job Aid* which can be found at :  
[http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire\\_training/publications/job\\_aid.html](http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training/publications/job_aid.html)
- **FWS** - *The Fire Management Handbook*.
- **FS** - *The FSH 5109.17. AD hires sponsored by the Forest Service will meet FSH 5109.17 position qualification standards.*
- **NPS** - *L380 Fireline Leadership is recommended training for single resource bosses; L-381 Incident Leadership is recommended training for RXBI.*

#### Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS)

The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the fire qualifications and certification record keeping system. The Responder Master Record report provided by the IQCS meets the agency requirement for maintaining fire qualification records. The system is designed to provide managers at the local, state/regional, and national levels with detailed qualification, experience, and training information needed to certify employees in wildland fire positions. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification decisions. However, it does not replace the manager's responsibility to validate

1 that Employees meet all requirements for position performance based on their  
2 agency standards.

3  
4 A hard copy file folder will be kept for each employee. The contents will  
5 include, but are not limited to: training records for all agency required courses,  
6 evaluations from assignments, position task book verification, yearly updated  
7 IQCS forms, and the Responder Master Record (RPTC028) from IQCS. All  
8 records will be stored and/or destroyed in accordance with agency policies.

- 9 • **BLM** - *These policies can be found at*  
10 *[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/regulations/combined\\_record\\_schedules.](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/regulations/combined_record_schedules.html)*  
11 *html*
- 12 • **NPS** - *[IQCS Account Managers should have an IQCS Delegation of](http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html)*  
13 *[Authority if they are serving as the Certifying Official. Delegation of](http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html)*  
14 *[Authority can be found at: <http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html>](http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html)*

### 15 16 **Certification of Non-Agency Personnel**

17 Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments, or  
18 private training providers ~~are~~ approved by a Memorandum of Understanding  
19 (MOU) through their local GACC. Agencies will not assist in the  
20 administration, or sponsor the Work Capacity Test (WCT), as the certifying  
21 agency.

### 22 23 **Incident Qualification Card**

24 The agency administrator (or delegate) is responsible for annual certification of  
25 all agency and ~~Administrative~~ Administratively Determined (AD) personnel  
26 serving ~~in wildland and on wildfire~~, prescribed fire ~~positions~~. ~~Agency~~  
27 ~~certification is issued annually in the form of an Incident Qualification Card~~  
28 ~~(formerly the Red Card) certifying the individual is qualified to perform in a~~  
29 ~~specified position. The Incident Qualification Card must be reviewed for~~  
30 ~~accuracy and signed by the agency administrator or delegated official. The~~  
31 ~~agency administrator, fire manager, and individual are responsible for, and all~~  
32 ~~hazard incidents. This responsibility includes~~ monitoring medical status, fitness,  
33 training, performance, and ~~for taking appropriate action to ensure the~~  
34 ~~employee~~ ensuring the responder meets all position performance requirements.

35  
36 Training, medical screening, and successful completion of the appropriate WCT  
37 must be properly accomplished. All Incident Qualification Cards issued to  
38 agency employees, with the exception of Emergency Firefighter (EFF-paid or  
39 temporary employees at the FFT2 level), will be printed using the IQCS.  
40 Incident Qualification Cards issued to EFF or temporary employees at the FFT2  
41 level may be printed at the local level without use of the IQCS.

42  
43 Each agency will designate employees at the national, regional/state, and local  
44 levels as Fire Qualifications Administrators, who ensure all incident experience,  
45 incident training, and position Task Books for employees within the agency are

1 accurately recorded in the IQCS. All records must be updated annually or  
2 modified as changes occur.

- 3 • *NPS - Certification for Area Command and Type 1 Command and General*  
4 *Staff (C&GS) position task books will be done at the national office level;*  
5 *Type 2 C&GS ~~and FUMI position task books~~, and any position task books*  
6 *issued to park fire management officers will be certified at the regional*  
7 *office level. All other position task books may be certified at the local unit*  
8 *level.*
- 9 • *NPS - Certification of NPS Personnel. These policies can be found in*  
10 *RM18 Chapter 10*

#### 11 **Incident ~~Qualifications~~Qualification Card Expiration Dates**

12 ~~Red~~Incident Qualification Card positions requiring Work Capacity Tests (WCT)  
13 are valid through the fitness expiration date listed on the card. Incident  
14 Qualification Card positions that do not require WCT for issuance are valid for  
15 12 months from the date the card was signed by a certifying official.  
16  
17

#### 18 **Universal Training Requirements**

19 All personnel filling Incident Command System (ICS) positions on the fireline  
20 must have completed:

- 21 • S-130 Firefighter Training
- 22 • S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior
- 23 • L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline
- 24 • I-100 Introduction to ICS
- 25 • *NPS - It is NPS policy that two or more assignments be accomplished after*  
26 *completing a Position Task Book, and receiving certification, before an*  
27 *individual begins movement to the next higher level. It is also NPS policy*  
28 *to require two or more qualified assignments be accomplished in a position*  
29 *before an individual may become a position performance evaluator.*  
30 *~~Exceptions to this should be rare and well-founded.~~ The only exceptions to*  
31 *this policy are unit leader positions leading to Planning Section Chief,*  
32 *Logistics Section Chief, or Finance Section Chief. Subordinate unit leader*  
33 *positions require a minimum of one assignment after the PTB completion*  
34 *and position certification.*
- 35 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17.*

#### 36 37 **Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training**

38 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is required for all positions as  
39 identified in the *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide* (NWCG 310-1)  
40 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training must include the following core  
41 topics:

- 42 • **Avoiding Entrapments** - Use training and reference materials to study the  
43 risk management process as identified in the Incident Response Pocket  
44 Guide as appropriate to the participants, e.g., LCES, Standard Firefighting  
45 Orders, Eighteen Watch Out Situations, ~~Wildland Fire Situation Analysis~~

- 1 | ~~(WFSAWildfire Decision Support System (WFDSS))~~ direction, Fire  
2 | Management Plan priorities, etc.
- 3 • **Current Issues** - Review and discuss identified “hot topics” as found on the  
4 | current Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)  
5 | website. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season and  
6 | discuss implications for firefighter safety.
  - 7 • **Fire Shelter** - Review and discuss last resort survival including escape and  
8 | shelter deployment site selection. Conduct “hands-on” fire shelter  
9 | inspections. Practice shelter deployments in applicable crew/module  
10 | configurations. ~~No “live fire” exercises for the purpose of fire shelter~~  
11 | ~~deployment training will be conducted.~~
  - 12 • **Other Hazards and Safety Issues** - Choose additional hazard and safety  
13 | subjects, which may include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit  
14 | specific safety issues and hazards.

15  
16 These core topics must be sufficiently covered to ensure that personnel are  
17 | aware of safety concerns and procedures and can demonstrate proficiency in fire  
18 | shelter deployment. The minimum refresher training hour requirements for each  
19 | agency is identified below. Training time may be extended in order to  
20 | effectively complete this curriculum or to meet local training requirements.

21  
22 The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training course (RT-130) is not a self-  
23 | study course. Minimum requirements have been established for instructors for  
24 | Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training. These requirements will ensure that  
25 | an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge is available to facilitate  
26 | refresher training exercises and discussions.

- 27 • Lead instructors must be a qualified single resource boss.
- 28 • Unit instructors must be qualified firefighter type one (FFT1).
- 29 • Adjunct instructors may be utilized to provide limited instruction in  
30 | specialized knowledge and skills at the discretion of the lead instructor.  
31 | They must be experienced, proficient and knowledgeable of current issues  
32 | in their field of expertise.

33  
34 For additional information please refer to the ~~September 2007~~current *NWCG*  
35 | *Field Manager’s Course Guide* (PMS 901-1) at:  
36 | <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/fmcg.pdf>.

- 37 • **BLM** - 4 hours
- 38 • **FWS** - *No minimum hourly requirement; core topics as shown above will*  
39 | *be covered.*
- 40 • **NPS** - 8 hours
- 41 • **FS** - *No minimum time requirement. Content dictated by National Fire*  
42 | *Program Managers.*

43  
44 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training will have a 12-month currency.  
45 | Firefighters who receive initial fire training are not required to take Annual

- 1 Fireline Safety Refresher Training in the same calendar year. A web site,  
2 <http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>, titled *Wildland Fire Safety Training*  
3 *Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)* is available to assist in this training.
- 4 • **BLM** - The “Do What’s Right” training is required annual training but is  
5 not a ~~prerequisite~~ prerequisite for issuance of ~~an~~ Incident Qualification Card.

6  
7 Entrapment avoidance and deployment protocols are identified in the *Incident*  
8 *Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) (PMS No. 461/NFES No.1077)*. The guide  
9 contains a specific “Risk Management Process” and “Last Resort Survival  
10 Checklist”.

11  
12 ~~An IRPG will be issued to every fireline supervisor.~~

#### 13 14 **Qualification and Certification Process**

15 Each unit with fire management responsibilities will establish an Incident  
16 Qualification Card qualification and certification process. In areas cooperating  
17 with other federal, state, or local agencies, an interagency qualification and  
18 certification committee should include representatives from each unit. These  
19 qualification and certification committees provide management oversight and  
20 review of the wildland and prescribed fire positions under their jurisdiction. The  
21 committee also:

- 22 • Ensures that qualifications generated by IQCS or other agency systems for  
23 employees are valid by reviewing the training and experience of each  
24 employee.
- 25 • Determines whether each employee possesses the personal characteristics  
26 necessary to perform the wildland and prescribed fire positions in a safe and  
27 efficient manner.
- 28 • Makes recommendations to the appropriate agency administrator or  
29 designee who is responsible for final certification signature.
- 30 • Develops interagency training needs and sponsors courses that can be  
31 offered locally.
- 32 • Ensures training nominees meet minimum requirements for attending  
33 courses.

#### 34 35 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Qualifications**

36 Personnel from non-NWCG agencies meeting *NWCG 310-1* prerequisites, can  
37 participate in and receive certificates for successful completion of agency taught  
38 courses. Agency employees can complete the Task Blocks, Evaluation Record  
39 and Verification/Certification sections of a cooperating organizations employee  
40 Position Task Book. Agency employees will not initiate or complete the  
41 Agency Certification sections of Position Task Book for non-agency employees.

42  
43 Personnel from agencies that do not subscribe to the NWCG qualification  
44 standards may be used on agency managed fires. Agency fire managers must  
45 ensure these individuals are only assigned to duties commensurate with their  
46 competencies, agency qualifications and equipment capabilities.

Release Date: January 2010

1  
2 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Use on Prescribed Fire**  
3 ~~For The NWCG 310-1 *Wildland Fire System Qualifications Guide* establishes~~  
4 ~~the minimum qualifications for personnel involved in prescribed fires evaluated~~  
5 ~~to have low complexity, the agency and its local cooperators will jointly agree~~  
6 ~~on qualification requirements. An agency can also establish its own~~  
7 ~~qualifications for higher complexity prescribed fires where the resources of~~  
8 ~~other agencies are not utilized. For prescribed fires which are of moderate~~  
9 ~~complexity or higher and on which resources of more than one agency are~~  
10 ~~utilized, the minimum qualifications established in *NWCG 310-1 Wildland Fire*~~  
11 ~~*System Qualifications Guide* are required. - unless local agreements specify~~  
12 ~~otherwise.~~ This guide may be found at:  
13 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>  
14

## 15 **Physical Fitness**

### 16 **Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

17 Agency administrators are responsible for ensuring the overall physical fitness  
18 of firefighters. Employees serving in wildland fire positions that require a  
19 fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment are authorized one hour  
20 of duty time each work day for physical fitness conditioning. Employees  
21 serving in positions that require a fitness rating of moderate or light may be  
22 authorized up to three hours per week.  
23  
24

25 Fitness conditioning periods may be identified and structured to include aerobic  
26 and muscular exercises. Team sports are not authorized for fitness conditioning.  
27 Chapters 7, 8, and 9 of *Fitness and Work Capacity, 2nd ed. (1997)* and the  
28 FireFit Program (<http://www.nifc.gov/FireFit/index.htm>) provide excellent  
29 guidance concerning training specifically for the pack test, aerobic fitness  
30 programs, and muscular fitness training.

- 31 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17. NFFE Partnership*  
32 *bargaining unit employees may only be required to successfully complete*  
33 *the WCT once per year.*
- 34 • *FWS - See the Fire Management Handbook for specific direction.*
- 35 • *NPS - For health and fitness purposes, those who are fire-qualified at less*  
36 *than the Arduous fitness level are not required to meet the mandatory*  
37 *fitness program requirements of DO-57 for wildland fire management.*  
38 *They are strongly encouraged to participate in the voluntary fitness*  
39 *program, and must still meet physical fitness/work capacity requirements as*  
40 *outlined in Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (310-1) for positions*  
41 *with Moderate and Light fitness requirements.*  
42

### 43 **Medical Examinations**

44 Agency administrators and supervisors are responsible for the occupational  
45 health and safety of their employees performing wildland fire activities, and may  
46 require employees to take a medical examination at any time.

1  
2 Established medical qualification programs, as stated in 5 CFR 339, provide  
3 consistent medical standards in order to safeguard the health of employees  
4 whose work may subject them or others to significant health and safety risks due  
5 to occupational or environmental exposure or demand.

6  
7 Information on any medical records is considered confidential and must be kept  
8 in the employee's medical file.

9  
10 ~~Federal Interagency~~**Department of Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical**  
11 **Qualification Standards Program (IMSP)**

12 ~~The Federal Interagency Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards~~  
13 ~~has been fully implemented by the DOI agencies and continues to be~~  
14 ~~implemented throughout the FS. Those units who have not yet implemented the~~  
15 ~~new standards must continue to comply with the current agency standards as~~  
16 ~~stated under Agency Specific Medical Examinations section below until~~  
17 ~~implementation of the new standards is accomplished. Additional information~~  
18 ~~regarding the IMSP can be obtained at~~  
19 ~~[http://www.nife.gov/medical\\_standards/IMSP](http://www.nife.gov/medical_standards/IMSP)~~

20 All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program  
21 (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF who participate in wildland fire activities  
22 requiring a fitness level of arduous must participate in the IMSP at the  
23 appropriate level (see Medical Examination Requirements appendix N) and  
24 must be medically cleared prior to attempting the WCT. Additional information  
25 regarding the DOI-MSP can be obtained at  
26 [http://www.nifc.gov/medical\\_standards/](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/)

27 • FS - Refer to current agency direction.

28 Under the ~~IMSP~~DOI-MSP the Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) will only be  
29 required for arduous duty AD/EFF hires less than 45 years of age. If the  
30 AD/EFF answers "yes" to a HSQ question and is determined to be "agency  
31 mission critical" (e.g. single resource boss) an annual exam may be requested  
32 through the medical standards program. The HSQ is not required prior to taking  
33 the WCT at the arduous level for all other employment categories (e.g.  
34 permanent, seasonal/temporary, term).

35  
36 Employees or applicants ~~including AD/EFF~~, who fail to meet the Federal  
37 Interagency Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards as a  
38 permanent, seasonal/temporary, or term employee may not perform as an  
39 AD/EFF for arduous duty positions.

40  
41 ~~If for any reason, a Department of the Interior (DOI) BLM, NPS, FWS, BIA,~~  
42 ~~arduous duty Wildland firefighter (WLFF) develops a change in a firefighter's~~  
43 ~~medical status emerges~~  
44 ~~(injury or illness) between yearly medical exams, and that change prevents the~~  
45 ~~firefighter them from meeting any of the Wildland Firefighter Medical~~  
46 ~~Standards, then the firefighter and his/her supervisor are performing arduous~~

1 ~~duty lasting longer than three consecutive weeks, the WLFF is~~ required to report  
2 this change to ~~the IMSP through the customer service representatives~~ his/her  
3 supervisor who will then contact the DOI-MSP at wlffcsr@blm.gov or call 888-  
4 286-2521. ~~Upon receipt of the-~~ The DOI-MSP will consult with the respective  
5 Agency Fire Safety Representative and could request that the contracted medical  
6 provider ask for additional medical information, a determination regarding the  
7 firefighter's status will be made e.g. pending or cleared from the WLFF and  
8 reevaluate the WLFF clearance status.

- 9 • NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are  
10 collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.
- 11 • NPS - Medical clearance must be entered into IQCS.

### 12 **Agency Specific Medical Examinations**

13 This section applies only to those ~~units who have not yet implemented the MSP~~  
14 ~~for arduous duty and for all~~ employees and AD/EFF who participate in wildland  
15 fire activities requiring a fitness level of moderate or light.

16 The Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) will be utilized as a means to identify  
17 individuals who may be at risk in taking the Work Capacity Test (WCT) and  
18 recommend a medical examination prior to taking the WCT.

19 If any "Yes" answer is indicated on the HSQ, a medical examination is required  
20 prior to the employee taking the WCT. If there is a known pre-existing medical  
21 condition that is already being monitored under medical care (e.g., high blood  
22 pressure), a medical clearance statement will be provided by the physician in  
23 lieu of a medical examination prior to taking WCT.

24 Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the U.S. Civil Service  
25 Commission Certificate of Medical Examination Form, SF-78. Stress EKGs are  
26 not required as part of the medical examination and will only be approved if  
27 recommended and administered by the medical examining physician. Cost for  
28 exams will be borne by the home unit. If medical findings during exam require  
29 further evaluation, then the cost of any further evaluation or treatment is borne  
30 by the employee/applicant.

31 The examining physician will submit the completed SF-78 (and applicable  
32 supplements) to the employee's servicing human resources office, where it will  
33 be reviewed and retained in the employee's medical file.

- 34 • NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are  
35 collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.

### 36 **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**

37 Title 5 CFR Part 339 - Medical Qualification Determinations, which provides a  
38 determination of an individual's fitness-for-duty, authorizes solicitation of this  
39 information.

1 The approved OMB Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) may be found at:  
2 <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/2006/5100-31.pdf>.

3  
4 The information on the HSQ is considered confidential and once reviewed by  
5 the test administrator to determine if the WCT can be administered, it must be  
6 kept in the employee's medical file (EMF). This file may only be viewed by  
7 Human Resource Management (HRM) or Safety personnel.

- 8 • *FS - See Work Capacity Test Implementation Guide, see website:*  
9 *<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/>.*

10

### 11 **Work Capacity Test (WCT) Administration**

12 The Work Capacity Test (WCT) is the official method of assessing wildland  
13 firefighter fitness levels. General guidelines can be found in the "*Work*  
14 *Capacity Tests for Wildland Firefighters, Test Administrator's Guide*" PMS  
15 *307, NFES 1109*.

16

17 WCT Administrators must ensure that WCT participants have been medically  
18 cleared, either through Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards or  
19 agency specific medical examination.

20

21 WCTs are administered annually to all employees, including AD/EFF who will  
22 be serving in wildland fire positions that require a fitness level. The currency for  
23 the WCT is 12 months.

24

25 The WCT Record (see appendix M) captures information that is covered under  
26 the Privacy Act and should be maintained in accordance with agency Freedom  
27 of Information Act (FOIA) guidelines.

28

29 Administration of the WCT of non-federal firefighters is prohibited for liability  
30 reasons. Potential emergency firefighters who would be hired under Emergency  
31 Hire authority by the agency must be in AD pay status or sign an agency  
32 specific volunteer services agreement prior to taking the WCT.

33

34 A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) shall be developed and approved for each field  
35 unit prior to administering the WCT. See the sample JHA found in appendix U.  
36 Administer the test using the JHA/RA as a briefing guide.

- 37 • *BLM - A risk assessment shall be developed and approved for each field*  
38 *unit prior to administering the WCT. ~~AAA~~ RA for the WCT can be found*  
39 *at: [http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-700/wo740/tools/RAWorksheets/](http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-700/wo740/tools/RAWorksheets/RAWorksheet_Library.html)*  
40 *[RAWorksheet\\_Library.html](http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-700/wo740/tools/RAWorksheets/RAWorksheet_Library.html)*

41

42 Field units need to prepare a medical response plan (such as ICS-206 form) and  
43 evaluate options for immediate medical care and transport and identify closest  
44 emergency medical services. A minimum of a qualified **EMT/First**  
45 **Responder/Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)** must be on site during WCT  
46 administration. Based upon your specific evaluation a higher level of

1 emergency medical qualifications on scene may be warranted e.g. EMT or  
2 Paramedic.

3  
4 Document using the WCT Record (see appendix M). This document must be  
5 retained until the next testing. Units may also be requested to provide data from  
6 these records to assist in the evaluation of the WCT process.

7  
8 Personnel taking the WCT will only complete the level of testing (Pack, Field,  
9 Walk) required by the highest fitness level identified for a position on their  
10 Incident Qualification Card. To further clarify, employees shall not take the  
11 WCT unless they have an Incident Qualification Card qualification that requires  
12 it, and only at the fitness level required by that position as identified in the  
13 NWCG 310-1 or agency specific guidance or policy.

14  
15 Test results must also be entered in the IQCS annually to update the fitness level  
16 and date that will appear on the Incident Qualification Card. Physical fitness  
17 dates entered in IQCS will reflect the date the employee passed the fitness test.

18 • *FS - The Forest Service requires a minimum of a qualified Emergency*  
19 *Medical Technician (EMT) must be on site during WCT administration.*

### 20 21 **WCT Retesting**

22 Those who do not pass the WCT will be provided another opportunity to retest.  
23 Employees will have to wait at least 48 hours before retaking the WCT. If an  
24 employee sustains an injury (verified by a licensed medical provider) during a  
25 test, the test will not count as an attempt. Once an injured employee has been  
26 released for full duty, the employee will be given time to prepare for the test (not  
27 to exceed 4 weeks). The numbers of retesting opportunities that will be allowed  
28 include:

- 29 • Three opportunities for permanent employees required to pass a test for  
30 duties in the fire program.
- 31 • One opportunity for temporary employees required to pass a test (a second  
32 chance maybe provided at the discretion of fire management).
- 33 • *FS - The Forest Service also uses the WCT as the official method of*  
34 *assessing wildland firefighter fitness levels. The specific direction,*  
35 *Implementation Guide, Health Screen Questionnaire, and required*  
36 *processes can be found at the following web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/>.*

### 37 38 **WCT Categories**

39 The *NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, 310-1* identifies fitness  
40 levels for specific positions. There are three fitness levels - Arduous, Moderate,  
41 and Light - which require an individual to demonstrate their ability to perform  
42 the fitness requirements of the position. Positions in the “no fitness level  
43 required” category are normally performed in a controlled environment, such as  
44 an incident base.

- 45 • *BLM/FWS - Law Enforcement physical fitness standard is accepted as*  
46 *equivalent to a “light” WCT work category.*

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**Work Capacity Test Categories**

WCT Category	Distance	Weight	Time
<b>Arduous Pack Test</b>	3 miles	45 lb	45 min.
<b>Moderate Field Test</b>	2 miles	25 lb	30 min
<b>Light Walk Test</b>	1 mile	None	16 min

- **Arduous** - Duties involve field work requiring physical performance with above average endurance and superior conditioning. These duties may include an occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended periods of time. Requirements include running, walking, climbing, jumping, twisting, bending, and lifting more than 50 pounds; the pace of the work typically is set by the emergency conditions.
- **Moderate** - Duties involve field work requiring complete control of all physical faculties and may include considerable walking over irregular ground, standing for long periods of time, lifting 25 to 50 pounds, climbing, bending, stooping, twisting, and reaching. Occasional demands may be required for moderately strenuous activities in emergencies over long periods of time. Individuals usually set their own work pace.
- **Light** - Duties mainly involve office type work with occasional field activity characterized by light physical exertion requiring basic good health. Activities may include climbing stairs, standing, operating a vehicle, and long hours of work, as well as some bending, stooping, or light lifting. Individuals can usually govern the extent and pace of their physical activity.

**Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal Incidents**

Persons under 18 years old will not perform hazardous duties during wildland fire management operations on federal jurisdictions.

**Engine Modules**

Staffing levels and specific requirements for engine personnel may be found in Chapter 14, Fire Fighting Equipment.

**Helicopter Modules**

Staffing levels and specific requirements for helicopter personnel may be found in Chapter 16, Aviation.

**Smokejumpers (SMKJ)**

Smokejumpers provide professional and effective fire suppression, fuels reduction, and fire management services to help land managers meet objectives.

**SMKJ Policy**

1 Smokejumper operations are guided by direction in the *Interagency*  
 2 *Smokejumper Operations Guide (ISMOG)*.  
 3  
 4 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous  
 5 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas  
 6 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, equipment, communications,  
 7 organization, and operating procedures.  
 8  
 9 **SMKJ Smokejumper Organization**  
 10 The operational unit for smokejumpers is “one load.” A load is typically 8-20  
 11 smokejumpers and varies as per aircraft type.  
 12  
 13 **SMKJ Coordination & Dispatch**  
 14 Smokejumpers are a national resource and are ordered according to geographic  
 15 area or national mobilization guides.  
 16  
 17 **SMKJ Communications**  
 18 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and  
 19 programming procedures.  
 20  
 21 **SMKJ Transportation**  
 22 Smokejumper retrieval is accomplished by coordinating with the requesting  
 23 dispatch center. More detailed information can be found in the guides mentioned  
 24 above.  
 25  
 26 **SMKJ Safety**  
 27 All aviation and parachute operations will be accomplished in accordance with  
 28 standard operating procedures and regulations.  
 29  
 30 **SMKJ Training**  
 31 To ensure proficiency and safety, smokejumpers complete annual training that  
 32 covers aspects of aviation, parachuting, fire suppression tactics, administrative  
 33 procedures, and safety, related to the smokejumper mission and fire operations.  
 34 The training program for first-year smokejumpers is four weeks long.  
 35 Candidates are evaluated to determine:  
 36 • Level of physical fitness  
 37 • Ability to learn and perform smokejumper skills  
 38 • Ability to work as a team member  
 39 • Attitude  
 40 • Ability to think clearly and remain productive in a stressful environment  
 41

42 **SMKJ Qualifications**

Smokejumper Position	Target ICS Qualification
Department Managers	T2 & T1 Command & General Staff, FUMA

Spotter	ICT3, DIVS ATGS, RXB2, SOFR
Lead Smokejumper	STLD, TFLD, FOBS
Smokejumper	ICT4, CRWB, FIRB
Rookie Smokejumper	ICT5, FFT1, FOBS

1

2 **SMKJ Physical Fitness Standards**

3 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 4 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less
- 5 • 45 sit-ups
- 6 • 25 pushups
- 7 • 7 pull-ups
- 8 • 110 lb. packout over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes
- 9 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.

10

11 **Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC)**12 Interagency Hotshot Crews provide an organized, mobile, and skilled hand crew  
13 for all phases of wildfire suppression.

14

15 **IHC Policy**

16 IHC standards provide consistent planning, funding, organization, and  
17 management of the agency IHCs. The sponsoring unit will ensure compliance  
18 with the established standards. The arduous duties, specialized assignments, and  
19 operations in a variety of geographic areas required of IHCs dictate that training,  
20 equipment, communications, transportation, organization, and operating  
21 procedures are consistent for all agency IHCs.

22

23 As per agency policy all IHCs will be managed under the *Standards for*  
24 *Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations (SIHCO)*.

- 25 • *BLM/NPS - BLM Preparedness Review Checklist #12 (Hotshot Crew)*  
26 *supersedes the checklist found in the SIHCO.*

27

28 **IHC Certification**

29 ~~Annual~~ The process for IHC certification of IHCs is required prior to being  
30 ~~made available for assignment as an IHC. For certification the crew~~  
31 ~~superintendent will:~~  
32 Complete an appendix C from found in the *Standards for Interagency Hotshot*  
33 *Crew Operations* with their local FMO and local agency administrator *Crews*  
34 *(SIHCO)*, Chapter 5, page 14.

35

36 **Annual Crew Pre-Mobilization Process**

37 ➔ ~~The extent~~ superintendent of crews holding IHC status, the preparedness  
38 review previous season are required every 12 months will be at to  
39 complete the discretion of the Fire Management Officer, Annual IHC  
40 Mobilization Checklist (SIHCO Appendix C) and crew superintendent.

1 send the completed appendix C document to the local GACC prior to making the  
2 crew available for assignment each season.

### 3 Annual IHC Readiness Review

4 On an annual basis the superintendent of crews holding IHC status the previous  
5 season are required to complete the Annual IHC Preparedness Review (SIHCO  
6 Appendix B). This process is designed to evaluate crew preparedness and  
7 compliance with SIHCO. The annual review will be conducted while the crew  
8 is fully staffed and operational. The review is not required prior to a crew being  
9 made available for incident assignment at the beginning of their availability  
10 period. When a review document is completed the document is kept on file at  
11 the local host unit fire management office.

### 12 **IHC Organization**

13  
14 Individual crew structure will be based on local needs using the following  
15 standard positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Squad Leader,  
16 Skilled Firefighter, and Crewmember.

### 17 **IHC Availability Periods**

18  
19 The Crew Superintendent is responsible to inform local supervisor and the local  
20 GACC of any required changes in the crew's typing. IHCs will be available to  
21 meet or exceed availability periods specified in the current SIHCO-2004  
22 (Revised 2008).

- 23 • *BLM - IHC crewmembers will receive 40 hours of basic or refresher*  
24 *training before their first fire assignment in a fire season. Refresher training*  
25 *will include, but is not limited to, crew safety, risk management, firefighter*  
26 *safety, fire behavior, communications, and organization. The final*  
27 *responsibility for crew availability will rest with the Superintendent's*  
28 *certification to local unit management that all training is complete. The*  
29 *minimum tour of availability excluding required training periods for BLM*  
30 *IHCs will be 130 calendar days for crews in the lower 48 states and 90*  
31 *calendar days for crews in Alaska.*
- 32 • *NPS/FS - IHCs follow the SIHCO, including minimum tours. In some*  
33 *regions, tours may exceed the minimum based on preparedness and fuels*  
34 *funding levels, or non-fire funding for these resources.*

### 35 **IHC Communications**

36  
37 IHCs will provide a minimum of five programmable multi-channel radios per  
38 crew as stated in the *SIHCO*.

### 39 **IHC Transportation**

40  
41 Crews will be provided adequate transportation. The number of vehicles used to  
42 transport a crew should not exceed five. All vehicles must adhere to the  
43 certified maximum Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) limitations.

### 44 **Other Hand Crews**

1

**2 Policy**

3 All crews must meet minimum crew standards as defined in appendix T as well  
4 as any additional agency, state, or contractual requirements. Typing will be  
5 identified at the local level with notification made to the local GACC.

6

**7 Crew Types****8 • Agency Crews**

9 Agency hand crews consist of qualified agency personnel and are organized  
10 on a local basis. These crews are designated as Type 2 or Type 2 IA.

**11 • State Crews**

12 State crews are organized under the auspices of individual states. These  
13 crews may be designated as Type 1, Type 2, or Type 2 IA. These crews  
14 include organized state inmate crews.

**15 • Emergency Firefighter Crews (EFF)**

16 These crews are usually Type 2 crews consisting of agency sponsored on  
17 call personnel who meet the requirements for Type 2 IA or Type 2 as  
18 defined in appendix T.

**19 • Contract Crews**

20 These organized crews consist of personnel trained, equipped, and certified  
21 by a private contractor and must meet the contractual specifications as  
22 stated in their state or national crew contracts.

23 • *FS - The FS endorses the National Minimum Standards for crews and  
24 applies FSH 5109.17 for training requirements.*

25

**26 Wildland Fire-Use Modules**

27 Information on fire use modules can be found at:

28 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pubs317/PMS-317.pdf>.

29 • *NPS - The National Park Service has Wildland Fire Use Modules. The  
30 primary mission and priority of the modules is to provide skilled and mobile  
31 personnel to assist with Wildland Fire Use (WFU) Managed for Multiple  
32 Objectives in the areas of planning, fire behavior monitoring, ignition, and  
33 holding. Secondary priorities follow in the order below:*

- 34 ➤ Support burn unit preparation.
- 35 ➤ Assist with fire effect plot work.
- 36 ➤ Support mechanical hazardous fuel reduction projects.

37 • *NPS - As an interagency resource, the modules are available nationally  
38 throughout the fire season. Each module is comprised of a module leader,  
39 assistant leader and three to eight module members. See the Fire Use  
40 Module Operation Guide for specifics. Modules are mobilized and  
41 demobilized through established ordering channels through the GACCs.*

**42 Agency Certified Positions**

43 As a supplement to the qualifications system, certain agencies have identified  
44 the additional positions of Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3) - see Chapter  
45 17; Engine Operator (ENOP) - see Chapter 2; and Chainsaw Operators and  
46 Fallers listed below.

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- FWS - See the Fire Management Handbook for agency specific position information.

#### Chainsaw Operators and Fallers

The agencies have established the following minimum qualification and certification process for Chainsaw Operators (Incident Qualification Card certified as Faller A):

- Agency employees who are chainsaw operators and fallers must be minimally qualified as a FFT2 and meet the ~~standards at the~~ arduous fitness levelstandards.
- Successful completion of S-212, including the field exercise, or those portions of S-212 appropriate for Faller A duties.
- Agency administrator (or delegate) certification of qualifications after verification that training is successfully completed.
- Documentation must be maintained for individuals.
- The individual tasks required for completion of the “A” Task Book and the final evaluation for the “A” level saw operators must be verified or signed by a qualified “B” or “C” level saw operator.
- The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book must be evaluated by a qualified “B” or “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator Verification for “B” level operators must be signed by a “C” level saw operator.
- The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book must be evaluated by a qualified “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator Verification for “C” level operators must be signed by a state approved “C” level certifier.
- Each of the states/regions will certify and maintain a list of their current “C” class saw operators who they approve to be “C” class certifiers.
- The certification of “C” class certifiers will remain the responsibility of the agency administrator or delegate.
- All fire related (Incident Qualification Carded) saw operation qualifications are maintained through the IQCS system and will have a currency of five years.
- BLM/NPS/FWS - Position task book found at:  
<http://www.fire.blm.gov/training/blmtrng/PDFs/Faller/PTBFallerABC.pdf>
- FWS - See the Fire Management Handbook for additional direction.  
Information regarding FWS required annual chainsaw refresher can be found at: <https://fi.fws.gov/nclogon.html>. Requires logon.
- FS - FS direction can be found in FSH 5109.17 and FSH 6709.11.
- NPS - Exceptions to the above policy are:
- Size classes used in the Faller A, Faller B, and Faller C Position Task Book are guidelines and are not the determining factor in the complexity of a tree felling operation. The size classes are to be used as an evaluation tool during trainee evaluation. Chainsaw operators are expected to conduct a

- 1 thorough size up of each individual tree and determine the extent of  
2 qualification required to safely perform a felling operation.
- 3 ● *The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book and the*  
4 *final evaluation for the Class “B” saw operations must be verified by a*  
5 *qualified Class “B” or “C” saw operator.*
- 6 ● *The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book and the*  
7 *final evaluation for the Class “C” saw ~~operators~~operations must be verified*  
8 *by a ~~region approved Class~~qualified “C” ~~Final Evaluator~~level operator.*  
9 ~~➤—Each Certification of the regions will certify and maintain a list of~~  
10 ~~current, qualified Class “B” and “C” saw~~level operators, must be  
11 completed by a regionally-approved as Class “B” or “C” ~~Final~~  
12 ~~Evaluators.~~
- 13 ● *The certification of “C” class evaluators will remain the responsibility of*  
14 *the regional agency administrator or delegate.* level certifier.